

THE REFORMER AND CHRISTIAN.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.—*Jeremiah*, v. 1.

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A CONSCIENTIOUS BELIEF.

A person not long since summoned on a jury, plead to be exonerated from serving, from a conscientious conviction in his own mind of his incapability to decide on the criminality or demerit of men's actions. And who, strictly speaking, except the Almighty who knows all things, can do so? None but Him who knows the motives of men's actions, the erroneous views they may entertain, or the want of a correct sight of things that may exist in their minds, the strength of a temptation, or their inability to resist it, the disadvantages under which they have been brought up, without any agency on their part, as well as the circumstances in which they were placed, and by which they were surrounded at the time of their supposed delinquency—none but Him who knows all these and many other things too numerous here to mention, can pronounce correctly on the merit or demerit of what men may do. What a responsibility then in taking it upon ourselves to do this?—standing as it must in connexion with these words of Christ:—"All things whatsoever ye would that others should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets"—as also the following; "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again." A writer remarks on these words: "How great is the goodness of God in being so willing to put our own judgment into our own hands, as to engage himself not to en-

ter into judgment with us; provided we do not usurp the right which belongs solely to him in reference to others."

The apostle informs us, that he that esteemeth any thing to be a sin, to him it is a sin, were it even eating a particular kind of food; though at the same time he tells us he is persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that in itself, separately considered from the individual's belief, there was no sin in the eating of that particular food whatever, nor would it render the person better or worse in the sight of God. Carry this principle into many other things also, and who can correctly decide on the guilt or innocence of an individual except God alone.

The same apostle intimates to us, that the Lord receives him that acts conscientiously, and that however he may be judged by men, "he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand."

The apostle further informs us, that we are bound to live and act conscientiously towards God, in respect to what we believe is right for us to do; and says, "Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ"—to be judged according to what we know under the circumstances we have been placed, and the belief we have had—the work of the law written in the heart will be the test, conscience will bear witness, and our thoughts, the mean while, will accuse or else excuse one another, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. Who will be able to stand in this time of judgment, but those whose

conscience shall witness, and whose thoughts can testify to them they have acted conscientiously? "Every one of us," says the apostle, "shall give account of himself to God." And again: "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."

Furthermore, the rule given by the apostle John is of the highest authority, coming as it does from the disciple whom Jesus loved, and seems to fix the decision in this case on a still more firm basis. "If our hearts condemn us," says this apostle, "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God." Condemnation in a man's own mind will always follow when he does what he believes wrong, and is a punishment which God inflicts, and which none can evade or hinder when he sends it; and for sinners to punish sinners, is taking a great responsibility on themselves, since as they measure unto others, it will be measured to them again in the time of reckoning. How reluctant then must a true christian be to have any thing to do in such a business? choosing rather to leave it to God to determine the guilt and inflict the punishment. And does not the apostle say: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves; but rather give place unto wrath [or let there be the greatest occasion of it, without exercising it:] for it is written, vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

The person alluded to in the forepart of this article, was much exercised on the subject of his situation, conscientiously and sincerely so, and did not know what would be the consequences to him for declining, which he felt he must do under every circumstance. But on the ground assumed, he was freely and generously excused by the presiding judge, greatly to the relief of the individual's mind, who had deeply considered and felt the singularity and unusualness of his case.

The following extract from the "Bos-

ton Trumpet," will furnish some interesting reflections on the subject now under consideration.

"When we attempt to determine what punishment strict justice requires to be inflicted on a criminal, we undertake a difficult task. But we may arrive at some satisfactory general conclusions on the subject, by observing what constitutes criminality. At first view, it might appear that criminality consists in injuring others. A little reflection, however, will convince any person, that one may injure another without being criminal, not having designed any injury; while another might be very criminal in designing to injure others, but who, with all his exertions, should be unable to accomplish his designs. Hence we arrive at the conclusion, that criminality consists in the *design to injure others*."

Application was twice made to Christ to determine upon cases—once in respect to property, and again in the case of the woman who had transgressed the seventh commandment—and in each case he refused to act or decide, in compliance with the request, either respecting property or guilt. From among his own company one said to him, "Master, speak to my brother that he may divide the inheritance with me," or pronounce an opinion how he should do in the case. Christ answered, "Man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you," to determine in such matters. In the other case he said to those who brought the woman before him: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her," in the way of executing the punishment of the law upon her. Conviction by their own conscience soon sent them all away, one by one, and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst; when Jesus graciously said to her, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more"—which was all that Christ required.

Are Christians to follow Christ's example? or have they found out a better way to render themselves acceptable to their Maker, by deciding upon the guilt, and meting out the requisite punishment of their fellow men. Those who believe it right for them to do so, are the only proper ones to do it if it be done, and let others be excused. This it is believed is the only consistent course for men to pursue, and it is in unison with the expressed sentiment of the chief magistrate of our country, as here subjoined. "Far be it from him to expect or require that any member of the cabinet should, at his request, order, or dictation, do any act which he believes unlawful, or in his conscience condemns. From them, and from his fellow citizens in general, he desires only that aid and support which their reason approves, and their conscience sanctions." Again in carrying into effect a proposed measure, he distinctly repeats, that in the support of it, "he shall require no one of them to make a sacrifice of opinion or principle." A more just or consistent principle for every one to act from, and particularly for every one professing Christianity, was never perhaps laid down, and if followed out in all its bearings and under all circumstances, what beneficial results would follow from it to society, and to the world. It will bear the strictest scrutiny, without being moved or shaken, however restive some tyrants and persecutors may feel under its glorious sanctions and operations.

MAY IT BE SEEN.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION.

Christ called the wine he administered to his disciples, *the New Testament in his blood*; or in other words, the New Covenant or Gospel, confirmed or ratified by his death, the breach of which covenant or gospel, in accordance with all covenants in scripture, calls for a similar death on the part of those that break it which passed upon the victim that confirmed

it, and which will be carried into execution throughout Christendom, at the close of the present dispensation, upon all who have violated the principles and requirements of it, in all the appalling features of a sacrifice, unless mercy interpose; and that will only be on the condition so fully laid down and set forth in Ezekiel xxxiii. 10—20.

The covenant of the Lord by Moses, was ratified by the shedding of blood; and we have read of the sufferings which came upon the Jewish nation for the violation of its conditions and requirements. It remains to be seen, and soon will be seen, what is the severity of sufferings that will come upon Christendom, at the conclusion of the present dispensation, for violating the precepts and requirements of the Gospel. The Apostle plainly represents the sin of violating and despising the requirements of the Gospel, to be much greater than the sin of violating and despising the precepts of the law, in the following words:—"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For, we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.* It is a fearful

* The following figure is used by the Apostle in application to those living under the present dispensation, and it illustrates the criminality and its consequences of bringing forth unsuitable and injurious, instead of salutary and useful fruit and actions, under the privileges and blessings conferred by the Gospel. "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. But that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." As much as if he had said, "As the ground which drinketh in the rain by which the providence of God waters it, brings forth

thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Hebrews x. 23—31. 'This falling into the hands of God in judgment, will soon begin on Christendom, and the better sort of Christians will be the first to experience it; for judgment must *first begin at the house of God*.

To show the guilt and judge of the punishment which now hangs over Christendom, let us consider the nature and principle of all covenants, as revealed in scripture. We here avail ourselves of the labours of those who are well informed on this subject, and who thus state:—

"The word Covenant is derived from a word which denotes *to purify or cleanse*, and signifies properly a *purification*, or *purifier*; because in all covenants made between God and man, *sin* and *sinfulness* were ever supposed to be on man's side, and that God could not enter into any covenant or engagement with him without a purification: hence in all covenants, a sacrifice was offered for the removal of offences, and hence the word translated covenant, not only signifies a *covenant* or agreement, but also the *sacrifice* offered on the occasion. Almost all nations formerly, in forming alliances, &c. made their covenants or contracts in the same way. A sacrifice was provided, and its blood poured out before God; then the whole carcass was divided between the spinal marrow, so as to make exactly two equal parts; these were placed opposite to each

fruit to compensate the toil of the tiller; and continues to be cultivated, God granting His blessing to the labours of the husbandmen:—So, that which, notwithstanding the most careful cultivation, receiving also, in due times, the early and latter rain, produces nothing but thorns and briars, or noxious weeds of different kinds, is rejected, is given up as unimprovable; its briars, thorns, and brush-wood burnt down, and then left to be pastured on by the beasts of the field." This seems to be the custom in husbandry to which the Apostle alludes, and the prediction conveyed by the figure, will soon be fulfilled on Christendom.

other, and the contracting parties passed between them, or entering at opposite ends, met in the centre, and there took the covenant oath. This is particularly referred to by Jeremiah xxxiv. 18—20. 'I will give the men [into the hands of their enemies] that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant, which they made before me, [that every man should let his man-servant, and his maid-servant, being an Hebrew, go free, that none should serve himself of them, *to wit*, of a Jew, his brother,*] *when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof*; I will even give them into the hand of them that seek their life; and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.'

"It is impossible that a covenant can be made between an individual and himself, whether God or man: there must be at least *two* parties to contract with each other. And often there was a *third* party to *mediate* the agreement, and to witness it when made. And a covenant always supposes one of these four things, 1. That the contracting parties had been hitherto *unknown* to each other, and were brought by the covenant into a state of *acquaintance*. 2. That they had been previously in a state of *hostility*, or *enmity*, and were brought by the covenant into a state of *pacification* and *friendship*. 3. Or that being known to each other, they now agree to unite their counsels, strength, property, &c. for the accomplishment of a particular purpose, mutually subservient to the interests of both. Or, 4. It implies an agreement to succour and defend a *third party*, in cases of oppression and

* This covenant was made and also carried into effect, while Nebuchadnezzar was besieging Jerusalem. But when the Egyptian army came up against Nebuchadnezzar, and relieved Jerusalem for a time from the siege, they caused these servants to return again into subjection to their former owners.

distress. For whatever purpose a covenant was made, it was ever ratified by a sacrifice offered to God. As the *sacrifice* was required to make an atonement to God, so the *death of the animal* was necessary to signify to the contracting parties the punishment to which they exposed themselves, should they prove unfaithful.”*

Christ is expressly called the *covenant*, or more properly translated (says a commentator) a *covenant sacrifice*, in the following places: Isaiah xlii. 6. “I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that set in darkness out of the prison-house.” xlix. 9. “I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves.” Zechariah ix. 11. “As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant [or as in the margin, *whose covenant is by blood*] I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope.” These passages, delivered so long before

* This was almost universally the custom in ancient times, and continued in use in the time of the Romans. Livy, the historian, preserves the *form* of the imprecation used on such occasions, in the account he gives of the league made between the Romans and Albans. When the Romans were about to enter into some solemn league or covenant, they sacrificed an animal, and, on the above occasion, the *pater patratus*, before he slew the animal, stood, and thus invoked Jupiter, [supposed the supreme God.] “Hear, O Jupiter—should the Romans in public counsel, through any evil device, first transgress these laws, in that same day, O Jupiter, thus smite the Roman people, as I shall at this time smite this animal: and smite them with a severity proportioned to the greatness of thy power and might.” These covenants therefore were very solemn agreements, and were seldom violated even among the most barbarous and perfidious people.

Christ made his appearance among men, and the facts which have since transpired, ought to convince the most sceptical that Christ was indeed that covenant sacrifice alluded to for the accomplishment of the purposes set forth in the preceding quotations, but which purposes, for the most part, are yet hereafter to be fulfilled.

We now proceed to consider the more full revelation concerning this *covenant sacrifice*, as found in the New Testament, and the consequences or effects which are yet to follow from it to mankind in general. And here again we avail ourselves of the labours of others, more capable of giving the true meaning of some passages than we pretend to be, being ignorant of the original language in which the scriptures were written, the knowledge of which must be an advantage in determining the views designed to be conveyed.

“The words which we translate THE NEW TESTAMENT, should be rather translated THE NEW COVENANT; or, if it were lawful to use a periphrasis, *The New Covenant*, including a *Testamentary Declaration and Bequest*.” and we may add a BEQUEST of an inheritance and things which no child of man has ever yet come into the possession of. For the true inheritance, and the good things promised in the Gospel, will not be enjoyed until the followers of Christ drink that cup of suffering typified by the cup which Christ administered to his disciples just before his own sufferings, and that cleansing of their walk and conduct set forth or signified by the washing of the disciples feet. Then will they not merely have Christ dwelling *in them*, as is now their privilege, but they will be “*in him*, and know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made [in the time of these sufferings] conformable unto his death:” for all the followers of Christ will in a great measure be made conformable to his death, when they drink the cup of suffering

which ere long they will be required to drink, and which they must drink before they can reign with Christ in his millennial kingdom.

The word, translated the *Gospel*, further serves to confirm the views already presented, "as it signifies to publish or proclaim glad tidings, of things present and to come, and also to *foretell* or *predict*; to *prophecy*, to *divine* respecting those things. It also means the *blessings* and *privileges* promised in the New Testament, and which are so abundantly hereafter to be received and enjoyed."

Christ gave his actual life a sacrifice, when the New Covenant made with men under the Gospel was ratified; but Christians for the most part, (those particularly who put their trust in the Lord,) will only have to give up what may with much propriety be *called* their *life*, viz. that which is most near and dear to them, in the times that are at hand, when they will be called to answer for the transgression and breach of that covenant or Gospel they are now under. For who has not broken it? And if it has been broken in thought, word or deed, upon the principles of justice it calls for suffering and pain on the part of man, before he can receive acquittance, or advance one step in that more abundant life and salvation hereafter to be enjoyed. Christians, we again repeat, *must* suffer—they must know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings by suffering in many respects like him, and be made conformable to his death, before they will ever reign with him, or experience the power of his resurrection from all sin, and all evil.

These sufferings will, indeed, in the language of Apostle, fill up in the flesh of Christians, "that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ for his body's sake, which is the church;" for Christ will suffer with his people in these sufferings, though they will not know it, but think themselves rejected. But it is quite otherwise, for it is declared by the prophet Isaiah, when

speaking of these same sufferings, "In all their afflictions he is afflicted, and the angel of his presence will save them [when they consider all lost:] in his love and in his pity he will redeem them out of all their distresses." But it will be in his own time, and in his own way; which will be in the only proper way, and best time for it to be done. It is however in the time of these sufferings that, as intimated by the same prophet, "The captive exile [from all comfort and enjoyment] hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he may not die in the pit [of deep distress,] nor that his bread [or all nourishment and support] should fail." The more, however, any hasten to be loosed from their troubles in these trials, the smaller will be their progress in getting out of them. For they will be of such a kind as none but God can deliver from, and he will extend deliverance when all human dependance and efforts of their own have failed and are abandoned, and not before. And then in the next place, as seen in the next verse, the Lord thus addresses this captive exile, whose distress was so great, and whose hopes were so low (and to which condition all the Lord's people will be brought before the time of suffering is ended;) "But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea [of revolution and commotion of nations and kingdoms,] whose waves roared [in civil tumults and shakings:] The LORD of hosts is his name. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of my hand, that I may plant the heavens [establish a new state of things through such suffering and humbled ones,] and lay the foundations of the earth, [make quite another condition of things from the present,] and say unto Zion, Thou art my people." Isaiah li. 15.

These last trials which the people of God must pass through, will be a new kind of trials in many respects from any that have ever before been endured. To the true people of God they will not so much consist in having their

blood shed, or in the taking away of their natural lives, as in taking from them that which blood is called, *the life*, that which they hold most dear, dearer than any thing else, even dearer than temporal life itself. Therefore Christ says, in speaking of the wine he administered to his disciples, signifying these sufferings, "I will not henceforth drink of it, until that day when I drink it *new* with you in my Father's kingdom." Hence they will be a new kind of sufferings from any that have ever been undergone before, worse than being put to death. For, as at the time when Christ suffered, the prince of the world came in all his force and malice, and it was the hour when his emissaries were permitted to triumph, *and the power of darkness*. So also at this time the prince of this world will make another powerful effort, his emissaries will be very successful, and the *power of darkness* will be very great—depriving the Lord's people of all clear sight of any thing to support or comfort them, any sense of benefits to arise from their sufferings, or any of that strength and fortitude to bear and endure them which the martyrs had, and which therefore rendered their sufferings comparatively easy. Hence for this very reason, because this time of suffering will be so very severe, Christ, as he has promised, will drink this cup with them, or will suffer with them in this trial—it is the fellowship of his own sufferings, which the Apostle had some idea of, knew its benefits to the sufferer, and wished to partake of it for the sake of the blessing to be derived from it. But the time for it was not then come; nor if the Apostle had had a full knowledge of its nature and severity, could he perhaps possibly have still desired to partake of it. It is the last sufferings of the people of God. It is Christ suffering again in the flesh of his members *for his body's sake, the Church*, and it *fills up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ* for his church and people. Christ will then begin his

reign, and his followers will reign with him and suffer no more; nor will Christ suffer any more with or in them.

When Christ told his disciples he would drink what was signified by the fruit of the vine, new with them in his Father's kingdom, that kingdom or rule is meant, which his Father will exercise in righteousness and justice, when he is subduing to Christ's dominion and rule all who are his enemies, and have broken the new covenant, or the precepts and requirements of the Gospel, in thought, word or deed. For thus Jehovah the Father speaks concerning Christ his Son: * "Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool." This he will ere long do, and then the reign of Christ will begin, and his lately suffering people will reign with him, when, as foretold in Daniel, "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever: And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

The time of these last sufferings we believe has already begun with some, both in this country and in England; for judgment and suffering, when intended to be general, will always begin at the house of God first, and consequently will commence first in the better and more righteous nations. And we are favoured, or have the pain to know, that many in each of these countries, are enduring as great sufferings as they can bear up under. They are indeed too great for some to bear, for want of resignation to them; and hence so many are taking away their own lives in this country and England. Such a peculiar time in

* Of whom in a voice out of a bright cloud, Jehovah said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and commanded, saying, "hear ye him."

this respect, when there were so many instances of suicide both in England and America, was never known before, and it evidences the existence of very great trials, and those of the most severe kind. And if these things are done in the green tree in the dawn of a time of general suffering, and the righteous are scarcely saved at their beginning, (for we learn that many who take their lives in these days are among the better kind of people,) we ask, *If these things are done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry*, and where shall the ungodly and sinners appear when the Lord shall at length begin to deal with them? All will indeed be cut off, before the trials now beginning come to an end, who do not fully turn to the Lord. The Lord says in the time of these trials, Isaiah xxvii. 5. "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me." As bad as any have been, the Lord will cast off none that come to him in these times of severe trial, if they truly come to him, and have no other dependance.

Some may now imagine they shall escape these trials, and may mock and deride at such as commit suicide, instead of feeling pity and sympathy towards them on account of the anguish and suffering they must have endured to cause them to do this.* But remember, all will have to partake of these trials, either to their destruction or else to their entire amendment, before the judgments now impending are finished. We know these things to be so, or we would not state them; and if professors in general could see what is coming over the whole of Christendom, they would be more disposed to weep over it and its unfit state to meet such calamities, as Christ wept over Jerusalem, than to be light and trifling; and would also enter their

closets to obtain a preparation for this time of suffering, instead of continue going to meetings dressed in gaudy attire, to see and to be seen, and to attract admiration. Very little fitness to meet the trials which are near at hand, will be obtained by attending what are called religious meetings, and the associations and societies of the day. Entering the closet, and shutting the door, if practised, will be found much better adapted for acquiring a right sense of ourselves, and for obtaining help from God against times of trial and difficulty than going to meeting houses and public assemblies of any kind.

All commentators allow, that the wine which Christ gave to his disciples when he handed them the cup, was a type of suffering, or as they term it, "*the wine of suffering*." And why should Christ's disciples be called to drink it, except for the church of which they were the representatives? They certainly would not drink it for Christ, or for a representation of his sufferings. Undoubtedly it was for their successors at the termination of the present dispensation, and just before some important change in the state of the church should take place, when the type would have its full accomplishment in the sufferings that would be undergone. The cup which was drank after eating of the Pascal lamb, represented Christ's sufferings, and it was drank before the bread and wine, commonly called the eucharist, were administered. That cup had its fulfilment in Christ's sufferings in the garden, when he said, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," and when, on the cross, he "cried with a loud voice, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And much such a cup of suffering will every Christian have to drink, before he can reign with Christ, or enter into that more advanced state, called *the first resurrection*, and while partaking of it, he or she, as the case may be, will be ready also to cry, my Saviour and my God, why hast thou forsaken me, and left me

* "Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth." Isaiah xxviii. 22.

to perish and die in the anguish of suffering, without one ray of hope or comfort to support me under my peculiar and every way different trials from any ever before endured by any one—being altogether hopeless and irremediable, and in no way calculated to benefit myself, the cause of Christianity, or any one, but of a direct contrary tendency, in every respect.

So the person drinking the cup will judge, and so he will believe. Any thing short of such a kind of suffering as this, will not be that suffering typified by the cup Christ gave to his disciples. They will be a new kind of trials and sufferings, and as observed before, will be much greater than those endured by the martyrs—because they were more supported than Christians will be in the time of these sufferings. All that is dear and desirable to them will seem to be lost, and lost without any prospect of benefit or advantage to arise from the loss, to constitute it this cup. They will be left fully to believe so, in the time of their sufferings; whereas they are losing nothing that is of any real value, but gaining every thing valuable, and that is in reality of any worth.

Some, before many years, will know the truth of these things, for the time is at hand. And how many who now little think or expect ever to pass through such trials, will have to endure them; for none who belong to Christ will escape. Christ said of this cup, "drink ye all of it;" and as painful as it may be, it will not be unnecessary, or prove to his people any other than a "cup of blessing," to bring them into Christ, the true ark of safety and rest. And remember, as great as will be these trials, they will not be equal to those Christ endured—not one to stand by him that was his friend, or dared to own him—and he was mocked, scourged, spit upon and buffeted. Besides, Christians will have nothing to fear if they put their trust in the Lord. He that is the captain of their salvation endured greater sufferings

before them, and was *made perfect through sufferings*. And he will stand by his followers in all these sufferings, and the angel of his presence will not suffer any real harm to befall them, but will make all a blessing and a benefit if they look unto him. But they will not know that Christ is present with them, and suffering with them in their sufferings, and hence they will seem to sink to rise no more, when that power which raised Christ from the dead will raise them up, and they will be able to render praise and thanks for all they have suffered—knowing that all has been for the best, and has proved, instead of a curse, only a blessing, and without which they could never reign with Christ or enjoy that degree of comfort, peace and happiness, only to be found in those who are through these sufferings brought into that more advanced condition of holiness and rest never before enjoyed previous to these sufferings. For now, for the first time, they are found in Christ, not having their own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: and they will know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, having been made conformable unto his death, and having thereby attained (what the Apostle so much desired) unto the resurrection of [or rather as it should be rendered *from*] the dead.* Whereas before, Christ was only in them, and was greatly restrained in his willings and counsellings to righteousness, through their own willings of an opposite tendency and the prevalence of evil still uncrucified within them.

We conclude with a few extracts from a writer in England, who has lately come to see and to speak of the sufferings which are about to come upon Christendom. In remarking upon these sufferings, he says, "*Faith in God is all*," and observes: "If man

* See Philippians iii. 9—11.

will hold to God in his adversity, he will find it to be better for him than his prosperity. Christ trusted all to his God; and fainted not, nor was weary, but bore unto the end, though every 'one turned from his own battle and fought against the King of Israel alone.' All that flesh can bear he bore; and death he shunned not, nor hell, but took the lowest and worst cast of it—God all along had been waiting for a man who would trust him, in order that this man might express the perfectness of his image, and hold under him and for him the sovereignty of the created world." Again he says:—"The first fruit of the reviving faith of the church will be to bring her into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and to conform her unto his death; for till she descend with him, she will never ascend with him; until she be crucified with him through weakness, she will never be girded with his strength." "He brings her out of the pit wherein is no water but in it, it is said she hasteth to be delivered, showing her inferiority in patience of Christ. Truly the saints must not only *fill up what is behind of the sufferings of Christ in the flesh*, but come up to the fellowship and fullness of his sufferings. What means Zion else when she says '*My God hath forgotten me, and my Lord hath forsaken me?*' Isaiah xlix. 14."

THE CUP OF SUFFERING AND NEW DISPENSATION.

The cup of suffering to be endured in these latter days, will commence and proceed much in the manner hereafter described, whereby it will be seen, that sufferings and trials will of necessity first be experienced by the better and more merciful kind of Christians, answering to *the house of God*. As introductory to a description of these trials and sufferings, we would observe:

Mankind becoming so wicked, and the power of the adversary being so great, that the principle of overcoming

evil with good (heretofore always so successful) ceases to be any longer of any force or effect, except to strengthen the hands of the wicked and to encourage wickedness—"Therefore," as declared by the prophet Isaiah xxix. 14, the Lord "will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people [mentioned in the preceding verse that draw near him with their mouths, and with their lips do honour him, but have removed their heart far from him, and whose fear towards him is taught by the precept of men,] even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."—The Lord will, indeed, at this time begin to "do his work, his strange work," that none at first will understand or be prepared to proceed in; "and bring to pass his act, his strange act," never before witnessed or performed among men. This *work* will be the commencement of a new work, and the *act* will be the bringing in of a new dispensation, in which righteousness (not what we now call goodness) will be made use of to overcome wickedness, by opposing and making righteous and successful war against it, instead of bearing it in silence and passing it over without just rebuke, as heretofore has too much been the case by the most kind and forbearing Christians, out of regard to the feelings of the wicked and unrighteous, to their injury and encouragement in the practice of evil. This new way of proceeding will at first, as the prophet has said, be to the "vision" or sight of all, "as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned." None whether learned or unlearned, high or low in the scale of intelligence, will be able to understand or comprehend this new and strange work of the Lord, till

they have drank the cup of suffering that will be put into their hands even to the dregs, and they are compelled to give up, like the ox entangled in a net—willing for the Lord to have his own way with them in every case, and under all circumstances, saying, *thy will be done*. Then the cup will be taken out of their hands and they will drink it no more, but be called on to Awake, put on strength, and to put on their beautiful garments, and stand prepared to do what, and only what, God shall require of them.

Hear the words of the prophet Isaiah in the chapter before referred to. "Is it not a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field [all that is now prosperous, great and thriving] shall be esteemed as a forest? And in that day [of these heavy judgments] shall the deaf hear the words of the book [of divine providence not understood before,] and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness [for the dispensation when it first opens will be filled with heavy obscurity and darkness to all, even the best of men.] The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, [none other,] and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, [but this will be some time hence,] and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought. Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of [the supplanter, underminer, or spiritual] Jacob; Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine."

But to proceed to the subject more immediately under consideration.

The better kind of Christians, who are to be the first sufferers as intimated before, will not be aware of the arrival of such a state of things that good can no longer overcome evil; nor will they be in a prepared state to make righteous war against evil. Acting therefore as heretofore on the principle of overcoming evil by what is called good, and what has all along been good, but now ceases to be so under the circumstances of the case, and is only an evil, and encourages and produces evil, they have a new and uncommon trial to pass through. For following the principle so dear and congenial to their feelings, of endeavouring to overcome evil with good, without any benefit to themselves or others, but to the contrary, they will be quite worn out, sunk and discouraged under a sense of its insufficiency and inefficacy, and a conviction of their own entire helplessness; and this cup of severe suffering, the severest that a truly good man can possibly partake of, will bring them into the lowest depression and distress, so that life itself will be esteemed a burden and calamity too great to be borne; and it will continue to be so for a length of time, until they have drunk the cup of suffering to the very dregs, and wrung them out, and they plainly see they can do no more, but must sink irretrievably, and die under their distress. Then it is that the Lord takes the cup out of their hands, (Isaiah li. and lii.) and calls on them to awake, and put on their strength; to put on their "beautiful garments" of righteousness, not their former ragged and self-righteous ones, (abhorring now only all real wrong, not their own conceived and false notions of wrong;) and in this clothing, of a new and true righteousness, they will be required to make war against all that is really unrighteous, wicked and pernicious.

And this will be the first time that even the people of God will ever make a strictly righteous war; free from

every taint of asperity, selfishness, or sinister ends, but solely for promoting the cause of righteousness and the well being of men: and God will strengthen their hands, and make them from this time always successful, so that as mentioned in Isaiah, liv. 17, *No weapon formed against them shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against them in judgment they shall condemn.* "This," continues the prophet, "is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Christ will himself indeed, at this time, be their leader on the *white horse*, or in a new and righteous dispensation, and his people will follow him also on *white horses* or in this same dispensation, "clothed in fine linen, white and clean," making war conjointly with their leader, against the beast and false prophet, the kings of the earth, and their armies, and against any and all kinds of wickedness and wrong; and the beast will be taken, and with him the false prophet, that deceived them that received the mark of the beast, and that worshipped his image; and the remnant belonging to these and all other corrupt powers, systems and associations, will be slain by the power of truth producing conviction on the minds of men, or by the sword of divine truth which proceeds out of the mouth of him that sits upon the horse, who is called *Faithful* and *True*, and is named *King of kings and Lord of lords*: and all mankind will be fed and nourished, strengthened and invigorated in the ways of truth and righteousness, by the consequences of this great victory over all the corrupt governments, systems, creeds, and their abettors throughout the world, and will be subject and obedient to Christ and to his righteous sway alone, which will extend over all the earth, and peace, quiet and happiness, will every where prevail.

It will be perceived that this war, by the Lord's people, will not be a war of carnal weapons, but by the power and force of truth and righteous-

ness; and whoever begins this war before the right time, and before rightly prepared for it, will only meet with defeat (like the Israelites who attempted to enter the land of Canaan before the time, and before prepared to enter) and will injure himself and others, and experience greater troubles than if he had not made the attempt. Because, this is to be a strictly righteous war in every respect, not a resentful one, and it must be carried on under the authority of Christ, without a particle of ill-will, selfishness or any sinister motives; for God will no longer prosper any other kind of war, except for a short time, as a scourge upon the disobedient. And it will also now be plainly seen, that what Christ said in his time, will in some degree apply to all, down to the present day, viz. "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers"—taking from others a good name and the exercise of kind feelings, when they justly belonged to them, merely because they followed not with them, and also injuring and depreciating them when they had the power, more than they ought to have done, only for an honest difference in opinion. The business of all such thieves (and who in days past has not been one of them?) Christ says, is "*to steal, and to kill, and to destroy*;" that is, to steal from others a good name for differing in religious opinion when it justly belongs to them; to kill them by giving them some bad epithet and falsifying them; and to destroy them by misrepresentation and persecution, that their own cause and their own system of opinions may thrive on their downfall. To none of these, as we have seen, has the *porter* or Holy Spirit opened an entrance into the true rest of holiness and peace; but all have been justly kept out from attaining to it, and are yet wanderers in the wilderness of perplexity, disputation and disagreement. But when the "*good shepherd*" comes forth on the *white horse*, as the leader of his people, and they "follow him upon white horses, clothed in fine

linen, white and clean," an entrance is opened by means of Christ the door into the true kingdom of holiness, rest and peace; and whoever enters in by this door, shall be saved from all sin, disquiet and unhappiness, "and shall go in and out, and find pasture," or every thing to nourish, strengthen and refresh him. When Christ spake these glorious truths, we are told, "They understood not what things they were which he spake unto them:" yet they ought to be understood by us now; and if they are not, they will be before many years, by an experimental knowledge of their reality.

The prophet Zechariah, in speaking of the same war of righteousness before alluded to, and which is hereafter to be made by the Lord's people against all the existing evils now in the world (not with carnal weapons, but by the power and force of truth) thus describes it under the name of Jerusalem, which signifies *vision of peace*, and Judah, which means, *the praise of the Lord*:—"Behold, I will make Jerusalem [meaning in this prophecy what the Hebrew word signifies, *vision of peace*] a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem [or against the praise of the Lord, and vision of peace.] And in that day will I make Jerusalem [or the vision of peace] a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.—And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the Lord of hosts their God. In that day will I make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left.—In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall

be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." See Zechariah, chap. xii.

The same event is thus expressed in Micah iv. 13. "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth." Again, chapter v. 7, 8, 9. "And the remnant of Jacob [meaning here those that supplant or undermine the older and present existing state of things in the church and in the world] and the remnant [or few] of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of goats [marginal reading:] who if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off."

We are well aware that the terms made use of in the foregoing extracts, will convey an idea to the minds of many, that the Lord's people are here represented to fight as other men, and with carnal weapons. But in all these places it is just the contrary; their weapons are wholly of a spiritual kind; being the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Again. We would not wish it to be understood that the trials, constituting the cup of suffering, are to be of the same kind to all. They will be different to different persons, according as one thing is more trying and painful to one person than another. That which will be the most trying is the one they must expect. It is only the better kind

of Christians, those who are the most generous, kind and feeling, whose cup of suffering will principally be such as has been described in this article.

"One is your Master, even Christ."—
Matt. xxiii. 10.

Under the new dispensation, which the Lord is about to bring in, it will be clearly seen, that each one must just attend only to his own particular duty, without so much concerning himself about, or judging and determining respecting what is another's duty. This has all along been a very great fault. If Christ is the head of every man, according to the words of the Apostle, he has a right to direct each one to the particular work, and the way of doing it, that he sees proper, without being answerable to any one of his creatures for the nature of the work, or its consequences—and the person is in duty bound to do what he is commanded, without reference to what another may say or think with respect to it, whoever he may be. Because the prophet that was sent to testify against the altar that was at Bethel, was required not to eat bread nor drink water in the place, nor return by the way he came, does it follow that another prophet must do the same? Because, in another case, a prophet commanded one to smite him in the word of the Lord, does it follow that it would be right to smite another prophet?—Yet see what followed disobedience in both these instances. A lion slew them for not being obedient to the command. Again, because the Lord commanded Abraham to offer up his son Isaac, does it follow that it would be right for another to consent to offer up his son a sacrifice?

These instances are sufficient to show, that each for himself must attend to what is commanded him of the Lord, without any reference to the opinions or judgments of others. This judging one another, and determining for another, is great arrogance and presumption, and is productive of great

evil. The disciples once forbade one casting out devils, to proceed in his work, because he followed not with them. Did not Christ say, Forbid him not? interfere not in his business: he that is not against us, is for us. The writer of this has known some, under a belief that it was their duty, to do what he would have felt condemned for doing. He was kept from saying any thing for or against what they did, knowing them to be sincere and conscientious; and is now convinced that they had just as good a right to condemn and blame him for not doing as they did, as he had to condemn and blame them for what they did. Says the Apostle, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth." If a person having a number of individuals in his employment, tells one of them to do a certain thing, and also directs him how to do it; what right has the other individuals in his employment to tell him he should not do such a thing, or to interfere and attempt to hinder him in doing it?

Again, respecting teaching and preaching. We have said, in accordance with scripture, that in the new dispensation there will be no preaching or teaching one of another. But the reason is given. All shall be taught of God, and all shall know the Lord. Why then any more teaching? When a child already knows his letters, shall we continue to teach him those letters? Or when one is able to do any sum in addition or subtraction, must we needs still be teaching him how to reckon in those rules? When a person knows that four and four are eight, and that eight and eight are sixteen, what is the use to instruct him further on the subject. To use another figure in respect to teaching and preaching in the coming dispensation—when the sun is up, and all places are light, is there any occasion for lamps? When all is dark, and the sun is absent, lamps and light are very useful. But when the sun is up, what is their use? If any then go about

with a lamp, will it not be said to them, we have a better light than your lamp, and it is of no use to us. If there be any real dark places, there go with a lamp, if you have one, and it will be a benefit: but attempt not to keep those to your lamp, or desire them to give heed to it who have the sun for their light. For the Lord God and the Lamb will be the light in the new dispensation that will ere long begin, and people will give heed and attend to no other, should any be so unwise as to call people to their lamps, and wish them still to regard them and honour them, and to consider them as benefactors for their willingness to serve them with light by their lamps.

PROSECUTION FOR OPINIONS.

Since our last number, Abner Kneeland, editor of the "Investigator," Boston, has been indicted, tried, and sentenced on a charge of blasphemy, for expressing a belief that there is no God, no future existence, &c. The sentence of the municipal court, (from which he has appealed to a higher court) was three months imprisonment in the common jail, and to recognize in the sum of \$500, with sufficient security in the like sum, to keep the peace and be of good behaviour for two years.

This is somewhat a new business in this country, and its ultimate effects remain yet to be seen. Prosecutions for any kind of belief, or want of belief, fixes a hinge or prepares an entering wedge which has no stopping place, and to which no bound is affixed, but tends directly to crush all except the dominant sect, or a few principal sects. And how does such a proceeding comport with the principles of christianity? It certainly has not the semblance of any sanction from the New Testament. And who in all such cases must needs stand charged as the prosecutors? Not those making no pretensions to religion, for it is presumed they do not care any thing on the subject of what any one believes. Come then from whom they may as the immediate agents, the credit or discredit will be charged to the professedly religious portion of mankind. And now for an examination of the nature and character of such professors. We often hear of wolves worrying and tearing sheep, but we never hear of sheep worrying and tearing wolves or other animals. The Bible also speaks of certain false prophets and

professors, as being like *lions ravening the prey*, and *grievous wolves*. Why should any imitate such characters in this day, and particularly any professing christianity, which requires its adherents to love their enemies. It is certainly a poor way to promote or recommend christianity to engage in such a work.

There is also another point of light in which this matter presents itself. All professors will allow that Mr. Kneeland's mental sight is impaired, or put out, to hold the sentiments he does. And if so, is it not cruel to prosecute or punish him because he has lost his sight—no matter by what means this has been done. Those who in such a case can have a disposition to punish, instead of to feel pity, must be a grade worse than most savages. It is difficult indeed to say who are the most blind, those who do not believe in a God, or those who think it right to punish others for not having such a belief. And it is equally difficult to determine, which in the two cases will be most likely to be condemned in the day of final reckoning. It would be more consistent, and less cruel, to punish one who professes to believe in a God, because he will not worship him in the way we think he ought to do, than to punish one who does not believe there is any such being; and this is the natural bearing and tendency of all legal punishments on account of any religious opinions whatever. No limits have ever yet been set to them when the party beginning them have had the power to carry them forward.

TO OUR READERS.

We have issued this number sooner than was proposed in our last (affixing however that date,) because we believe troublesome times are at hand, and we wish to have the subjects treated of in this number in the hands of our readers as soon as convenient. We could point to many particular prophecies which we believe are near their accomplishment with respect to this country and Europe—but having failed in some of our previous calculations, by bringing the time too near, we cannot claim much belief respecting any thing we may say further, till there be a commencement of some of the events we have already described. Our belief however is unchanged in regard to all we have said as about to come to pass, only we brought the events too near.

We wish our subscribers to preserve their numbers, that they may be able to refer to them at a future time, when what has been stated may receive more credence by the evidence of facts and cir-

cumstances that shall transpire. A regard to our fellow men, with a deep conviction of the near approach of such events as have been described, has constrained us to say what we have, and time will show whether or not the descriptions which have been presented are accurately given. But whatever trials and calamities may come, let this be our consolation—all will be made subservient for good, and we shall be brought out of them in the end, a better and more prosperous nation than we have ever yet been. Of this there is not the shadow of a doubt, and it should serve to support and comfort us under the miseries and calamities which are fast hastening, and which no human art, wisdom or strength can avert. Why then should we so much blame the immediate agents made use of for accomplishing the most necessary and important (though to human appearance the most painful and distressing) results and purposes?

The author of a work entitled, "*The little book opened, or prophetic dissertation*," remarks as follows:—

"Who have ears to hear let them hear! The day which is opening is a day whereof the like was never known, ever since the day wherein God first breathed into our nostrils the breath of life: It is a day wherein all the prophets have rejoiced ever since the beginning of the world.—It is a day whereunto whatsoever is recorded in the Testaments to have been transacted between God and his church ever since the beginning of times, shall be found to have been but preliminary, or as it were, subservient."

A late writer in speaking of the Church says: "Her struggles and pretended reforms at various periods, have been like the amendments of the kings of Samaria: one would destroy the priests of Baal, and another would destroy his groves, but none would do that which alone was effectual,—abandon his calves at Samaria," &c.

THE LATE REVOLUTION IN MEXICO.

At a place called Morelia, on the 26th, and at Mexico on the 30th of May last, a revolution was commenced by a union of the priesthood and soldiery, on the pretext that the religion of the country was in danger from the existing government. The President of the Republic, Santa

Anna, was made prisoner, and he was required to give his consent to be made Dictator, after which it was intended to put him to death, and establish a system of things, more in accordance with the former usages and practices of the country and the wishes of the priesthood. The President refused to give his consent, and made his escape, and the government troops, after various engagements with the revolted chiefs, have now nearly brought the revolution to a close. The consequence of this attempt has been, that the dominant religion and the priesthood, have been deprived of many of their former privileges and immunities, and will be less capable hereafter of endangering the tranquillity of the country. The property of the churches and convents (said to be worth fully 100,000,000 dollars) has been seized with a view to extinguish the home debt and pay foreign contracts; monastic vows and the payment of tithes are abolished, and foreigners from all nations, except such as are at war with Mexico, are allowed to settle in the country, and to enjoy all the political and religious privileges granted to citizens.

"*The Falling Stars*."—It appears from the annexed paragraph, that the phenomena of the "Falling Stars" was seen also in Mexico.

MEXICO, Dec. 1.—By letters from Monterey, (New Leone,) we learn that on the 13th ult. there was much excitement in that town, in consequence of stars having been seen like so many suns, and a torrent of fire having been discharged from the extremities of the atmosphere, taking a northerly direction.—*Jour. of Com.*

NOTICE.

The next number will be issued the first of May, and we here again request that every one not satisfied with the present course of the work, will return this number, and have their subscription discontinued in future. Whether they can settle up or not is left to themselves. To defray the necessary expences of publication it is requisite that those who continue to receive the work, should in future be punctual in pay.

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